

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1856

AN ACT

To amend the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a volunteer pilot project at one national wildlife refuge in each United States Fish and Wildlife Service region, and for other purposes.

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To amend the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 to direct the Secretary of the Interior to conduct a volunteer pilot project at one national wildlife refuge in each United States Fish and Wildlife Service region, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “National Wildlife Ref-
 5 uge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Act of
 6 1997”.

7 **SEC. 2. VOLUNTEERS AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS**
 8 **FOR WILDLIFE.**

9 (a) PROMOTION OF VOLUNTEERS AT NATIONAL
 10 WILDLIFE REFUGES.—Section 7(b)(2) of the Fish and
 11 Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742f(b)(2)) is amended
 12 by adding at the end the following: “Any gift or bequest
 13 made for the benefit of a particular national wildlife refuge
 14 or complex of refuges shall be disbursed only for the bene-
 15 fit of that refuge or complex of refuges.”.

16 (b) AWARDS AND RECOGNITION FOR VOLUN-
 17 TEERS.—Section 7(c)(2) of that Act (16 U.S.C.
 18 742f(c)(2)) is amended—

19 (1) by inserting “awards and recognition,” after
 20 “lodging,”; and

21 (2) by inserting “without regard to their place
 22 of residence” after “volunteers”.

23 (c) VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP EN-
 24 HANCEMENT.—Section 7 of that Act (16 U.S.C. 742) is
 25 amended by adding at the end the following:

1 “(d) VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP
2 ENHANCEMENT.—(1) The purposes of this subsection are
3 the following:

4 “(A) To encourage the use of volunteers in the
5 National Wildlife Refuge System.

6 “(B) To facilitate partnerships between the Na-
7 tional Wildlife Refuge System and partner organiza-
8 tions.

9 “(C) To promote participation by individuals,
10 organizations, and communities in understanding
11 and conserving the fish and wildlife resources, lands,
12 and facilities of the National Wildlife Refuge Sys-
13 tem.

14 “(D) To enhance the availability of interpretive
15 and educational materials and services for the enjoy-
16 ment of visitors to national wildlife refuges.

17 “(2) Subject to the availability of appropriations, the
18 Secretary of the Interior shall conduct a pilot project at
19 1 national wildlife refuge in each United States Fish and
20 Wildlife Service region, under which the Secretary shall
21 employ a full-time volunteer coordinator for each refuge.

22 “(3)(A) Subject to the compatibility requirements of
23 the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act
24 of 1966 and this paragraph, the Secretary of the Interior
25 may enter into a cooperative agreement (as that term is

1 used in chapter 63 of title 31, United States Code) with
2 any partner organization, academic institution, or State
3 or local government organization, for the conduct of a
4 project on a national wildlife refuge, under which—

5 “(i) there will be provided enhanced opportuni-
6 ties for private citizens to volunteer with a national
7 wildlife refuge in their local communities and con-
8 tribute to stewardship of the resources on that ref-
9 uge;

10 “(ii) a partner organization, academic institu-
11 tion, or State or local government organization will
12 develop, produce, publish, distribute, or sell edu-
13 cational materials and products pertaining to a na-
14 tional wildlife refuge approved by the Secretary,
15 under conditions specified by the Secretary;

16 “(iii) a partner organization, academic institu-
17 tion, or State or local government organization will
18 construct, maintain, operate, or improve a facility on
19 a national wildlife refuge necessary for the sale or
20 distribution of educational materials, products, pro-
21 grams, and services pertaining to national wildlife
22 refuges;

23 “(iv) a partner organization, academic institu-
24 tion, or State or local government organization will
25 provide visitor services, facilities, or activities within

1 a national wildlife refuge, under terms that require
2 that the net profits from such services, facilities, or
3 activities shall be used exclusively for projects and
4 programs that benefit the refuge and are consistent
5 with the purposes for which it was established; or

6 “(v) there will be carried out within a national
7 wildlife refuge, on a Federal/non-Federal cost shar-
8 ing basis, habitat restoration and improvement, bio-
9 logical monitoring, research, public education and
10 recreation, construction of facilities, or other
11 projects.

12 “(B) Any Federal funds used to fund a project under
13 a cooperative agreement under this paragraph—

14 “(i) may be used only for expenses directly re-
15 lated to the project; and

16 “(ii) may not be used for operation or adminis-
17 tration of any non-Federal entity.

18 “(C) A partner organization, academic institution, or
19 State or local government organization shall not receive
20 preferential treatment in any application process to pro-
21 vide visitor services, products, or facilities in a national
22 wildlife refuge.

23 “(D) Any facility or permanent improvement con-
24 structed pursuant to this subsection shall be the property
25 of the United States Government.

1 “(4)(A) Amounts received by the Secretary of the In-
2 terior as a result of activities under paragraph (3) shall
3 be deposited in a separate account in the Treasury.

4 “(B) Amounts in the account referred to in subpara-
5 graph (A) that are attributable to activities at a particular
6 national wildlife refuge or complex of refuges shall be
7 available to the Secretary of the Interior without further
8 appropriation—

9 “(i) for materials, training, and other uses re-
10 lated to volunteer activities at the refuge or complex
11 of refuges; or

12 “(ii) to carry out cooperative agreements under
13 this subsection applicable to the refuge or complex
14 of refuges.

15 “(5) For the purposes of this subsection, the term
16 ‘partner organization’ means an organization—

17 “(A) the mission of which is to promote under-
18 standing and conservation of the fish and wildlife,
19 cultural, or historic resources of a particular na-
20 tional wildlife refuge or a complex of related national
21 wildlife refuges;

22 “(B) that draws its membership primarily from
23 communities near that refuge or complex of related
24 national wildlife refuges; and

1 “(C) that is described in section 501(c)(3) of
2 the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and exempt from
3 taxation under section 501(a) of that Code.

4 “(6) In addition to amounts available under para-
5 graph (4)(B), there are authorized to be appropriated to
6 the Secretary of the Interior for each of fiscal years 1998,
7 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003—

8 “(A) \$1,000,000 for carrying out activities
9 under this subsection and subsection (c); and

10 “(B) \$1,050,000 for pilot projects under para-
11 graph (2) among the United States Fish and Wild-
12 life Service Regions.”.

13 (d) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 7(c)(6) of
14 that Act (16 U.S.C. 742f(c)(6)) is amended by striking
15 “\$100,000 for the Secretary of the Interior and”.

Passed the House of Representatives November 4,
1997.

Attest:

Clerk.